

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 NEA-10 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /077 W
----- 077331

R 211342Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8935

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 893

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, XO, AS

SUBJ: PRAVDA ON SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN INDIAN OCEAN

REF: MOSCOW 0854 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. PRAVDA JANUARY 21 CARRIES
JANUARY 20 REPORT BY CORRESPONDENT BOL'SHAKOV
ON RECENT VISIT OF U.S. SENATORS TO AUSTRALIA WHICH
GOES SOMEWHAT BEYOND NORMAL SOVIET SNIPING AT DIEGO
GARCIA IN TREATMENT OF INDIAN OCEAN ISSUES.

2. CITING AUSTRALIAN PRESS, BOL'SHAKOV HAS FRASER
TELLING SENATORS, WHO INCLUDED OPPONENTS OF DIEGO
GARCIA, THAT CONSTRUCTION SHOULD CONTINUE AND THAT
NEW AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED TO EXPANF COCKBURN
SOUND BASEUEME AUSTRALIAN ORGANS, BOL'SHAKOV
SAYS, ARE DESCRIBING DG CONSTRUCTION AND COCKBURN
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SOUND EXPANSION AS "NOTHING MORE OR LESS THAN

NECESSITY OF BALANCING SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN
INDIAN OCEAN."

3. BUT, CONTINUES BOL'SHAKOV, "THIS KIND OF STATEMENT
CLEARLY DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO THE FACTS. THE SOVIET
UNION DOES NOT HAVE MILITARY BASES IN THE INDIAN
OCEAN. THE PASSAGE OF SOVIET MILITARY VESSELS ON
ESTABLISHED SEA ROUTES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN DOES NOT
REPRESENT A THREAT TO ANYONE AND IS NOT A VIOLATION
OF INTERNATIONAL LAW."

4. CONSEQUENTLY, BOL'SHAKOV CONCLUDES, STATEMENTS
ABOUT SOVIET THREAT MERELY REFLECT THE DESIRE OF "CERTAIN
CIRCLES" TO KEEP UP TENSION IN THE WORLD, AND PAR-
TICULARLY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN ZONE. END UNCLASSIFIED.

5. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT. AS DISTINGUISHED
FROM ATTACKS ON U.S., DEFENSE OF SOVIET ACTIVITIES
IN INDIAN OCEAN IS RARE. THIS ONE PROBABLY REFLECTS
CONCERN AT INTENTIONS OF NEW AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT
AS MUCH AS ANY OTHER FACTOR. AT SAME TIME, IT IS
ALMOST CERTAINLY NOT THE FULL PRAVDA RESPONSE TO
CHANGES IN AUSTRALIAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOVIETS
(REFTEL). END CONFIDENTIAL.
STOESSEL

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, DIEGO GARCIA, MILITARY BASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MOSCOW00893
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760023-0844
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760135/aaaabery.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 MOSCOW 854
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <01 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRAVDA ON SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN INDIAN OCEAN
TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, XO, AS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006